

Rotary Club of Christchurch South



Geraldine Hassell—Volunteering: The Key to Healing

Initially I thought Mel was the guest speaker as he had quite an involved story involving a pub crawl in Nelson and environs, a trip to KFC, and ending up at a Rotary meeting by surprise as he went to find dinner at the local RSA but it turned out Geraldine Hassell was our guest speaker.

Geraldine was introduced by Sarita as the woman behind Geraldine's Roses which we have the opportunity to purchase just before Christmas. Geraldine told us about her background: she grew up on a family farm in Takaka and she was the youngest of 6 children. She later married Bill and raised 3 children on their farm in North Canterbury. They also bought a cattle stud and she got involved in national cattle associations which enabled her to travel to Brazil and France. Bill and Geraldine's children married, and Bill and Geraldine were blessed with 9 grandchildren.

In November 2013, Bill came off his horse on the farm, broke a few bones and recovered. In June 2014, he had a blood test and this led to the finding of a bowel tumor near his liver. The tumor was removed, and Bill recovered well however they found that as a result of his fall from the horse, the tumor had spread through his abdomen. Bill had 20% chance of survival. Bill underwent chemotherapy but this did not resolve the cancer and Bill passed away at home in June 2015 aged 70. Bill died grateful for his life.

Geraldine spent the next year on the farm, but her health was not too good during that time as she contracted whooping cough. She also felt isolated and so moved to an urban area after selling the farm to a young couple just starting out. She knew Bill would have wanted that.

Geraldine was looking for something to do and researched volunteering. She had heard of the cancer charity: "Look Good and Feel Better" while Bill was sick, so she contacted them and became a patient's advocate. She also got involved with Ronald McDonald House and she now works in the children's day room in oncology. She has met many amazing children who give life meaning, even though they have a bad prognosis. They teach her gratitude for her healthy grandchildren as well as gratitude for meeting them.

Geraldine did some work for a community centre to prepare food parcels. This was not her favourite work so, having a huge love of roses, she thought she could sell roses for fundraising for Ronald McDonald House. She got onto this and said how grateful she was to Sarita for her help in selling the roses. Sarita had sold half of her supply.

Geraldine talked about doing a fundraising event in Amberley with her friend Jenny for Ronald McDonald and Westpac Helicopter Rescue. It was a fun event and well supported. She concluded that volunteering has been a lifesaver for her and she was thankful. As long as her physical and mental wellbeing stayed in place, she would continue to do this.

Interestingly, there were no questions from members: just expressions of connection and wow. It was such an inspirational story and well told.

Thanks Kathryn for this weeks report.

Next Week

Southern Environmental Trust forum continued

Upcoming Rotary Events

Saturday 14 March

RLI Seminar

Barbara Crooks—021966631

Wednesday 20 May

CHCH South Awards Evening

The Sign of the Takahe

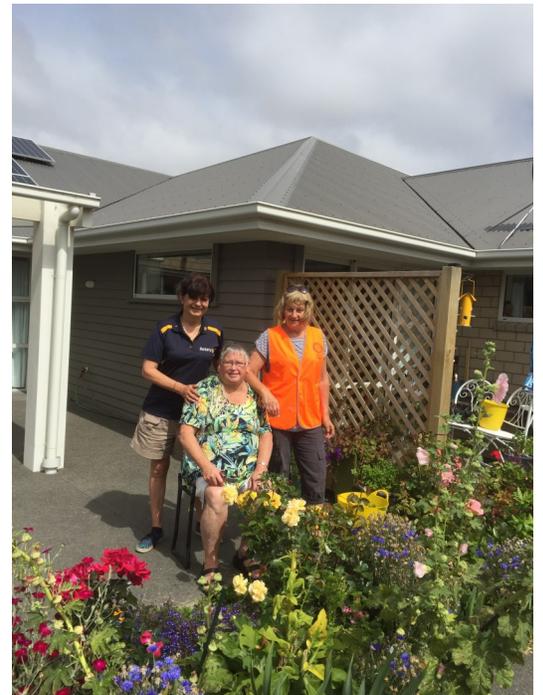
Notices

On Thursday 30th January, Viv Ellis, Chris Airey and I arrived at the Abbeyfield House in Wigram to weed and prune the residents individual gardens outside their units. This followed a request from a fellow Rotarian Fenn Shaw who has involvement with Abbeyfield.

We spent a couple of hours working in these gardens. We are looking at returning to Abbeyfield on Thursday 13th February to finish the remaining units.

We were warmly received by the residents as well as the cook Tina, who provided us with some home made bread rolls, filled with corned beef and salad, as well as a cup of tea!!! A very enjoyable time was had by all.

In Rotary Service
Sara Mackenzie.



Duties

Duty	5 Feb	12 Feb
Cash Desk	G Fowler	A Airay
Cash Desk	M Rickerby	D Buist
Reception	H Garlick	L Bermingham
Speaker Host	C Ayrey	G Dockrill
Grace	K Dalziel	S Harris
International Toast	D Buist	J Woodward
Thanks to Speaker	J Chamberlain	D Peterson
Quote	A Kim	B McKessary
Speaker Reporter	M Opie	C McCarthy
Sergeant	D Peterson	A McCully
Deputy Sergeant	A Stewart	L Brown

Leave

Who	From	To
R Blyth	08/04/15	TBA
M Whitehead	09/09/15	TBA
V Nossiter		TBA
J Wylie		TBA
K Tanner	04/07/19	31/12/20
R McKinney	01/11/19	20/04/20
S McLean	16/01/20	04/03/20

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Reminders

Record your apology by:

- Notifying the Reception Desk
- Email chchsouthrotary@gmail.com before 11am on that Wednesday
- Emergency apologies to Mike Bruce on 022 540 1251

- You will receive an email reminder a couple of days before the meeting re apologising or bringing a guest
- If you are unable to do your allocated duty, it is your responsibility to arrange a substitute and advise the President
- Leave of absence requests (three weeks or more) must be in writing to the Secretary